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MIND AWAKE, BODY ASLEEP- A PERSONAL EXPERIENCE

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We hear about the idea of *mind awake, body asleep* in our consciousness studies all the time. It's a concept that's relatively easy to grasp, but I recently experienced it in a whole new way—a way that, honestly, terrified me at the time. If you've been following along with the Monroe Institute blogs, you may have read about my sleep paralysis before. It's a phenomenon that's plagued me for over twenty years, and it also came into play with this strange *mind awake, body asleep* experience I had.

Basically, I was deep asleep and dreaming away. In the middle of my dream, I realized that my throat was very dry, and I needed to swallow. I tried, but couldn't make it happen. I tried again to no avail. At this point, something clicked, and I said to myself, "Oh, I'm asleep, so I can't actually swallow right now, but I need to. I should wake up." Suddenly, bam! I was fully and completely conscious, yet my body was still completely and fully sound asleep. I guess you could consider it similar to a lucid dream; however, I didn't feel as though I was dreaming anymore at all—I felt 100% awake. I could think, problem-solve, react, etc. Yet my body was deeply and soundly asleep. My first reaction was panic. It was as though I was in sleep paralysis after all, as I was fully conscious, but my body was asleep and couldn't move. It's hard to explain this phenomenon. If it was sleep paralysis I was experiencing, it had never felt like this before.

Sleep paralysis always feels as if I'm on the verge of waking, as that's when it occurs in my sleep cycle. It can still be terrifying, but with sleep paralysis, I know that if I try hard enough, eventually I can thrust myself to the side or get my body to move enough to wake myself up. This was quite different. I knew that I was deeply asleep, yet I was completely conscious. It was a state of *mind awake, body asleep* in a way I had never felt before, and I couldn't wake myself as I had before.

Honestly, looking back on it now, I wish I had explored this further. Perhaps it was actually the beginning of an out-of-body experience that I could have explored more, as I knew exactly where everything was in relation to me. I knew my cat was lying on me. I knew my husband was next to me. I knew my other cat was on the cat tree, all

without *seeing*. I was “seeing” in a different way, just by knowing spatially what was happening around me. Unfortunately, I had no control over my emotional impulse to freak out, as again, I’d been traumatized by sleep paralysis throughout my life.

Being able to problem-solve in this state, I immediately tried to move my hand, and I realized that somehow, this time, I easily could. I began to shake my whole hand back and forth, thumping it against my husband’s back, which woke him immediately. He knows my struggles with sleep paralysis, so when he saw me doing it, he grabbed my hand and shook it slightly. Generally, with sleep paralysis, I am close enough to being awake that a little shake is all it takes to rouse me out of it. Since this was an entirely new, deep sleep experience, my husband tried to shake my hand, but nothing happened. I could feel his efforts to wake me, but I couldn’t do it! He began to jostle me, but I still couldn’t awaken, though I felt him shaking me and exclaiming, “Malorie!? Are you okay?”

He explained to me later that he thought I was having a seizure, as my hand was violently shaking, but I was doing it purposely to try to get him to wake me. Finally, after shaking me much harder a few times, I jolted awake exclaiming, “What was that!?” Honestly, neither of us had experienced anything like this before, and I’m still mildly confused by it. It was something much different than lucid dreaming, as with lucid dreaming, you are still asleep. For this, like with sleep paralysis, I was completely, fully conscious, but my body was still fully asleep. If it was the start of an OBE, I missed the opportunity in the chaos of the moment. I’m beginning to understand the idea of *mind awake, body asleep* in a way I never had before. Only time will tell if it happens again, and if so, I hope I can experience it in a new way, with a more positive and exploratory attitude.